

Go **DHAMMANTARĀYA**

(Buddhism In Danger)



*Burma (Union) Dept. of Information and
Broadcasting.*

DHAMMANTARĀYA

(*Buddhism In Danger*)

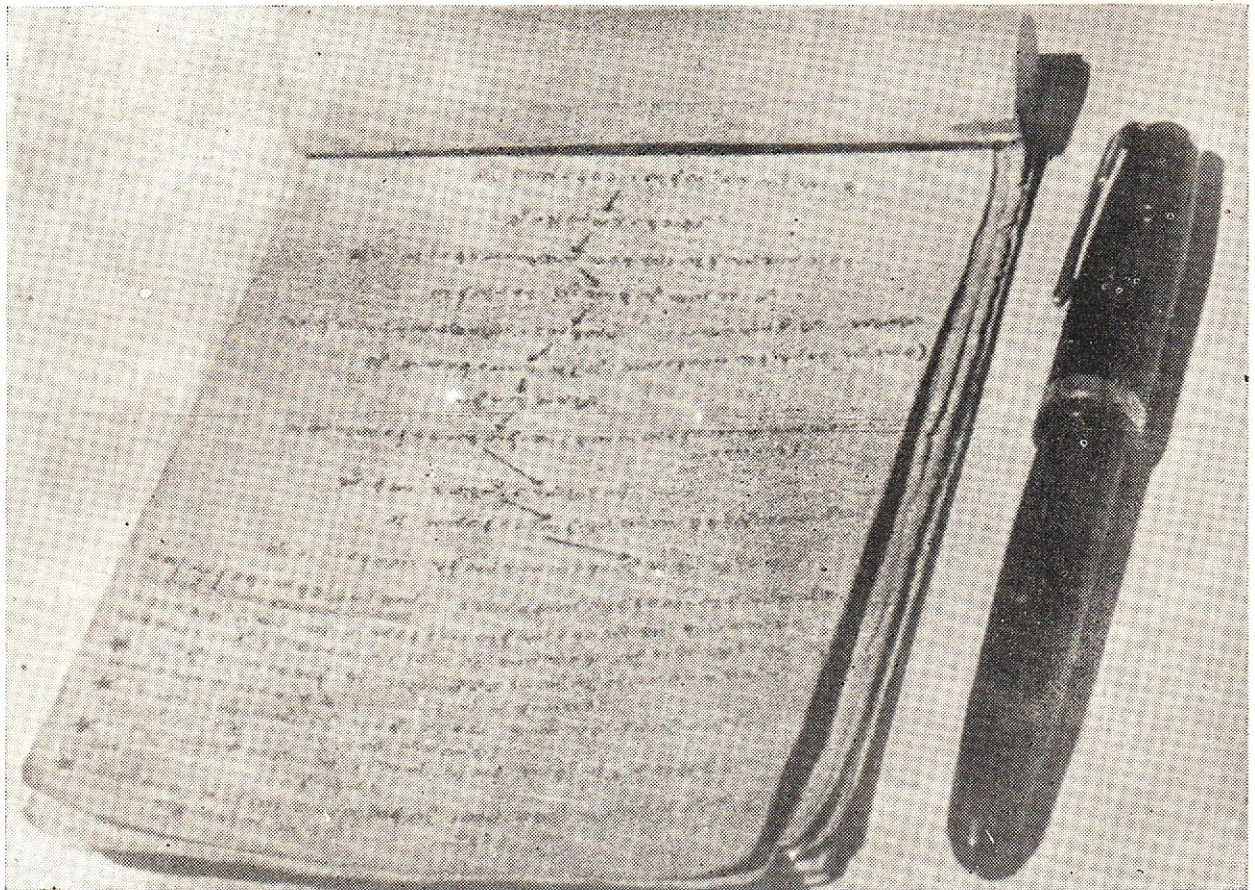
WHO IN THE UNION OF BURMA ARE POSING
THE GREATEST DANGER TO BUDDHISM?

*Translation of a booklet published jointly by the Ministry of Information and the
Ministry of Defence, Union of Burma*

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Communist note-book.

FOREWORD

FOR SOME TIME, we have been in possession of a pocket book of notes taken down by a young Communist cadre at indoctrination classes. It is a small note-book, four inches by six in size, but closely written (*see photograph on facing page*).

Since 1942, the Red Flag Communist party leader Thakin Soe held such classes for many young Burmans who were ardent anti-Imperialists. These indoctrinated young people are now engaged in anti-Buddhist, anti-Constitution, anti-Burmese activities, both above and underground, like the flesh of Burmania's flesh, turned cancerous, destroying its own begetter. Some of them, after years of apostasy as Burma Communists, have in the end seen through the false god at whose feet they had been worshipping and have confessed their error and are now atoning for their past sins.

The owner of that note-book was a close pupil of Thakin Soe. His whereabouts are unknown nor whether he has repented yet. But a friend of his, class-mate and fellow-traveller is now with us. He is so convinced of Communist errors that he has not only abandoned them but is also combating them himself. It was from him that we received the aforesaid note-book. On handing it over to us he gave us the following explanation:

"In the underground, Thakin Soe is called U Tun Wei or Ko U, or just Sayagyi. In 1944, he was running a bureau called 'Answers to Questions' at the secret Party Headquarters. I was at the time a party member quite close to him. There was another cadre like me to whom this pocket book belonged. It was so many years ago that I cannot now remember whether his name was Comrade San Nyun or Comrade Htay Myaing or Comrade Tun Than. There was one Ko Htay Myaing who went over to the White Flag Communists when the Communists split into two, the same Htay Myaing who surrendered recently.

"I borrowed this note-book as I had to copy something out of it, but I lost sight of the owner suddenly and to this day I have had no opportunity to return it. You will find in it plenty of anti-Buddhist blasphemy as taught to us by Thakin Soe in his classes. These classes had a history which I shall now recount.

"Somewhere in the beginning of 1944, I happened to have sent in under my underground name of San Ngwe, a question, 'Is it true that the fundamentals of Buddhism and the Communist dialectical materialism square with each other?' In the party leaflet, Answers to Questions, Number 2, Thakin Soe replied in extenso with many criticisms of Buddhism. I shall read out some of them."

Ko San Ngwe produced his own note-book and read as follows:

"The ideology of Nibbana is an ideology of despair. Despairing of freedom in this world, in this existence, it seeks escape from this world and this life into Nibbana.

"Of all the fanciful ideologies, this Nibbana is the most fanciful with its basic doctrine of Two—(Avijjhā and Tanhā) Ignorance and Clinging, the middle doctrine of (Paticca Samuppada) Dependent Origination, and the end doctrine of (Nirodha) Cessation of Suffering.

"So far from attempting to solve the problem of the beginning of life, it forbids any attempt to find the beginning of all forms of life, arguing that

it has nothing to do with the path to Nibbana, perhaps for fear that the discovery of the beginning of life will reveal the impossibility of the cessation of rebirth. Therefore, our dialectical materialism and the fundamentals of Buddhism are poles apart.

“ ‘Religion’, say Marx and Engels, ‘is the opium of the people.’

“ Only by liquidating Capitalism which is throttling the progress of productive forces, and thus establishing necessary material environment, can religion be attenuated to disuse and gradual disappearance.

“ A Burmese politician once sought to prove that Marxism supported Buddhism by pointing out examples where Buddhism squares with the discoveries of modern science. To such, Lenin had given the warning that a religion which had been processed to square with modern science is more crafty than simple old religions and therefore more harmful to the proletarian class.”

Ko San Ngwe closed his note-book and went on with his explanation :

“ We were young and naive then, and as we were also lacking in knowledge and experience, we were led to believe the things Thakin Soe said. Even so, we could not help thinking that if the great Buddhist public of Burma only knew what blasphemous attacks were being made on the national religion, what a furore there would be. Within the party there was no lack of publicity. Thakin Soe’s ‘Answers to Questions’ anti-Buddhist leaflets were distributed to all members and through them to considerable numbers of young people. In Thakin Soe’s later classes also, Buddhism was increasingly criticised with increasing vehemence. I hand over to you the ‘Answers to Questions’ leaflet that I still have with me together with the pocket note-book that I had borrowed so that you can bring them to the notice of the whole country. Please use them as you think fit.”

* * * * *

We had wondered before what made the Communists so bold as to scoff at the teachings of the Buddha, rifle the relic-chambers of pagodas, smash, fire, mutilate and otherwise desecrate the images of the Buddha. It is only after we have studied this leaflet and this note-book (which we did several times) that we began to find the answer.

We have also gathered corroborating evidence from many surrendered Communists who had been insurgents these ten long years. In the heads of some of these surrendered personnel, the Communist view of religion, especially Buddhism, was still persisting. ‘Religion is the opium of the people’—‘Buddhism is the enemy of the proletariat of Burma: it must be attacked at every opportunity’—these words were still ringing in their ears.

Those there were who had totally abandoned the Communist ideology because of its absolute incompatibility with religion. According to them, the man who calls himself a Communist and still hankers after religion is a fraud. Every Communist must attack any religion at every opportunity. In this, all Communists, White Flag, Red Flag, PCP, are all agreed. Every Communist must forswear religion and be very clear-cut about this. Some, fearing lest they should seem not clear-cut enough in the eyes of their comrades, took deliberate steps to parade their anti-Buddhism by vilifying the Buddhist monks

and reviling the mute images of the Buddha—in front of a reclining Buddha-image they would profane, “*I say, Gautama, it is time to get up.*” Thus, they hoped to be recognised as very clear-cut anti-Buddhists indeed !

Ex-Minister Saw San Po Thin reported to us word for word what Thakin Than Tun had once said to him (we have a tape recording of his report in the Defence Services Historical Research Institute) thus:

“What do you think Thakin Than Tun once told me while gazing at the golden spire of the Shwedagon Pagoda? ‘All that gold all over that pagoda is sheer waste. If ever I come into power I will take it all off the pagoda and use it for the government of the country’.”

If ever the Communists come into power ! With their intransigent attitude towards religion, ‘*the enemy of the people*’, and ruthless war against Buddhism, the fate of Buddhism, Buddhist institutions and people in this country is imponderable.

If they come into power ! Already, the Communists of Burma are calumniating the Buddha, the Sangha, the Buddhist traditions, and traducing the best tenets of the Buddha’s teaching, hell-bent on the destruction of that gentle influence which is the foundation of our civilization.

In this 2,500th year of the Buddhist Era, Buddhism is again threatened by heathen enemies as it had been in the time of the Buddha Himself. To the cancerous brood of Burma Communists who started the flames of insurrection in the country and set fire to the Buddha-images, the gentle and profound teachings of the Buddha are gall and wormwood—‘*arch enemy* !’ No wonder they are bent on wiping out the entire Dispensation of the Buddha. As long as this Dispensation stands they will never come into power. That must be the reason for their unremitting campaign against Buddhism.

As the Buddha has ordained, no member of his Order of Bikkhus may own anything beyond the four necessities of monastic shelter, yellow robes, almsfood and medicine. No Dispensation can be more unassuming and pure. Yet in their lust for power, they are bent on its destruction, if not in one decade, in two. Great indeed is the danger which Buddhism is facing now !

In bringing to the notice of the country the extracts from the tell-tale leaflet and note-book, so that all Buddhists may become aware of the dangers lowering, we are only doing our duty. The Buddhist Order of monks on whom lie heaviest the responsibility of safe-guarding the Dispensation, as well as all Buddhists, please beware, the time is no longer for us to underestimate the danger and remain indifferent. As fire grows by what it consumes, the Communist fire which is gradually consuming our religion can become a conflagration. We therefore consider that the time has come for us to start putting out the fire and scattering the embers.

May Buddhist monks and Buddhist laymen all successfully combat the anti-Buddhists and remove all dangers threatening Buddhism.

Directorate of Information,
Ministry of Information;

and

Directorate of Education and Psychological Warfare,
Ministry of Defence.

RANGOON 15th April, 1959.

Who are the Enemies?

In the Union of Burma, the Burma Communists, their supporters and their sympathizers are the people who are posing the biggest menace to the cause of Buddhism.

Literary contributions from members of the Sangha and laymen desiring to refute the big Red lie of the Burma Communists are welcome. They should be addressed to the Directorate of Information, Phayre Street, Rangoon, and should not exceed five foolscap pages for publication in the "Pyidaungsutha" or other suitable periodicals.

"Buddhism is Opium of the Worst Kind"

Allegation by the Burmese Communists

In Burma, so long as the Buddha's Dispensation holds sway and the people of the country revere the three Gems—the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, and practise goodwill and forbearance in their relations with one another, Communism cannot spread.

The Burma Communists know that, and therefore, their first objective is to scorch Buddhism root and branch out of the land. To that end, their secret cells are sparing no effort night and day. They realise that Buddhism is their arch-enemy and they have marked it down as such. Colloquially speaking, they have their knife in Buddhism and the Buddhists. The Buddhists on their part do not seem to be even aware of this terrible hatred. They cannot figure out why Burma Communists should harbour such hatred. For, as good Buddhists, they practise goodwill and forbearance so that feelings of hatred and enmity are none of their pre-occupation. As the proverb has it: "He knows how to accuse who knows how to steal." No wonder, they little suspect that the Burma Communists have 'their knife in them.' Unfortunately, their benign attitude will not make the Burma Communists hate them any the less. On the contrary, hatred of Buddhism is being whipped up among the Burma Communists from their secret centres. Their hearts are aglow with the hatred of Buddhism.

"Our leaders say that religion is the opium of the people," says Thakin Soe in an indoctrination class, and goes one better, "Buddhism is opium of the worst kind. Buddhism cannot liberate you from the world's ills," meaning that the Buddha was a charlatan, a superlative quack, who for forty-five years preached nothing but propaganda which bound the people to their misery. He was the people's enemy Number One. His way was the worst way. While people were drowning in the whirlpool of *Samsara*, he pushed them under with a barge pole.

Thus spake Thakin Soe, and many tender and immature young people learn to hate the Buddha and His teaching, while the Buddhist people remain unperturbed, unaware of the terrible danger besetting them and their religion. If this indifference continues, the Burma Communists will become bolder and who knows they will not some day level to the ground the pagodas, the monasteries and the temples? Then, the sound of temple bells, prayer bells and prayer gongs will be heard no more in our fair land of pagodas.

Here is an extract from one place in the little note-book not at all complimentary to the Buddha:

"When the Buddha appeared 2,500 years ago, the world was in the age of slave labour. Science had not yet developed. History was not yet ripe for the concept of liberation.

Therefore, the Buddha had to think up a fantastic concept of liberation—there is Nibbana for you !”

The more we studied the pages of the leaflet and the note-book, the more we discovered this sort of blasphemous things. Their ideology puts Matter above Mind, the latter being merely a product of the former, a part of the whole. Man is no more than his physical being; when the body is dead, there is the end of the Man. Death is the end of you. One existence only without before or after—uccheda-ditthi or annihilation—belief, a sort of carnal heathenism—that is what they believe in.

Of the 62 kinds of (ditthi) wrong beliefs, dialectical materialism of the Burma Communists is one—the belief that there is neither Cause nor Effect (ahetuka-ditthi). Creatures are the outcome of procreation without purpose and for no cause. So far as the creature is concerned, death is the dead end. No rebirth.

This is not a new heresy but a refurbishing of a — two-thousand-five-hundred-year-old — heresy although the Burma Communists think that they are on to a new thing, a fit instrument in their hand with which to destroy the country. In Lord Buddha's time, there was a heathen called Makkhali Gosala with his Communist-like followers. He taught them that Matter was supreme. Mind was subservient to Matter. When the body died, it became earth. Mind perished with the body. “So eat, drink and do what you like. Pay no heed to the liar, Gautama, with His ‘don'ts’ and His ‘do's.’ He is only collecting followers.”

This doctrine of one-life and matter-supreme is a most handy one for the Burma Communists for whom no pre-occupation need be so worthy as eating, sleeping and cohabiting. That being the case, they are little better than animals, though of course they are not animals.

As mind is held to be only a by-product of the physical body, a mere part and parcel, the Burma Communists have no use for the higher activities of the mind such as abstract thinking, contemplation and meditation. All that is just day-dreaming. To bother about anything beyond the present existence is a waste of time.

But according to the Buddha, both Mind (Nama) and Matter (Rupa) are realities (paramattha-Sacca). Of the two, Mind is supreme. Mind over Matter, the former conditioning the latter. The whole material universe is built and maintained by the aggregate evolution of all the Minds in the universe from existence to existence for aeons and aeons. Good and bad deeds first originate in the Mind and Volition (Cetana) precipitates the Deed (Kamma).

Mind alone is the dominant factor shaping up the universe. Volition (Cetana) is Action (Kamma) for through volition one performs the action by body, speech or mind. Thus spoke the Buddha to his disciples: “Cetanaham bhikkhave Kamman Vadami”—“Volition, oh, disciples, that, I say, is Kamma.” Manifestly, the Buddha's teaching is the exact opposite of the creed of the Burma Communists. Hence, their vicious campaign to uproot Buddhism from the soil of Burma.

"Nibbana Is Nonsense"

Allegation by the Burmese Communists

What we found in the dossier handed over to us by Ko San Ngwe sometimes made our hair stand on end. The lies the Burma Communists have been spreading about religion, especially about Buddhism, could hurt like lances pricking the heart.

According to them, Gautama was no scientist. He was a charlatan, an impostor. How could he solve world problems? Knowing that he could not, he yet would not admit it like an honest man. He had to say a lot about deliverance from the ills of the world, but he could not do anything about it. He only evaded the question, beat about the bush. When finally he found that the numberlessness and the magnitude of the world's ills were too much for his skill, he resorted to empty statements such as "escape from the world and thus escape from the world's ills." Were he honest about it, he would have confessed that he had not the ability to solve the problem of the world's ills. Being neither honest nor capable of scientific

thinking, he let loose the opium fumes of religious propaganda and urged the bemused masses to turn their backs on the world and look towards that preposterous Nibbana. As a matter of fact, the burden of the world's ills was too big for his shoulders. He despaired as any one would. But there were his followers who believed in him. He simply could not afford to be shown up before all of them. He must find or invent a face-saving ideology. So he invented that preposterous ideology of Nibbana.

Such obloquy is being dinned into their followers and ceaselessly disseminated from their hide-outs, both vocally and in print. Here is a page we have reproduced from the original note-book (Plate I):

"In this world there can be no deliverance from suffering. To escape suffering, you must escape from the world. Born of this despair was the defeatist ideology of Nibbana."



"None of the Buddha's Dhamma Is True"

Allegation by the Burmese Communists

Our Lord Buddha is also dubbed "the great day-dreamer" by the Burma Communists. The two truths of *avijjā* (ignorance) and *tanhā* (clinging) are also wrong, they say. So is the *paticca samuppada* (dependent origination). All the four noble truths: Dukkha-Sacca (Suffering), Samudhaya-Sacca (Origin of Suffering), Nirodha-Sacca (Cessation of Suffering), Magga-Sacca (Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering) are all wrong, they say. Another page of the note-book we have reproduced (Plate II)

has this to say:

"It is not the mind which causes existence. It is existence which causes the mind. Therefore, it is existence and nothing else which causes the clinging. *A fortiori*, the Buddha's teachings, beginning, middle and end, are dead wrong. The ideology of deliverance from suffering by escaping to Nibbana is among all fantasies the most extravagant."



63 वा. २. भा. १२२५. Selection

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(survived the fittest) (conf 24.64 in conf 24.62)

[illegible]

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unity of opposites is relative. (and 9)

Conflict of opposites is absolute. (color)

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(reflexion of material on the human brain) .

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"The Doctrine of Cessation of Suffering is Impossible"

Allegation by the Burmese Communists

"Our party cannot accept the doctrine of Cessation of Suffering (Nirodha-Sacca). So far from attempting to solve the problem of the beginning of life, Buddhism forbids any attempt to find the beginning of all forms of life, saying that it does not lead to the path to Nibbana, perhaps lest the discovery of the beginning of life should reveal the impossibility of the cessation of suffering. Thus, our dialectical materialism and Buddhism are diametrically opposed."—(*ibid*).

[Poor benighted fools! They have apparently never benefited from a study of the Abhidhamma, the third and most abstruse section of the Tripitika in which the Buddha (Whose teaching compared to His omniscience is as a handful of leaves to the leaves of the forest) had expounded not only the beginning of life but also the beginnings and ends of universes, and the cycles of their evolution from the uniform density in empty space of protons and electrons to stars, solar systems and galactic systems, and back again to empty space, and the why and how thereof!]

In another page reproduced from the note-book (Plate III) Thakin Soe quoted Lenin's warning:

"A religion which has been processed to square with modern science is more crafty than simple old religions and therefore more harmful to the dispossessed masses. We must beware of such religions."

In this manner, the Burma Communist leaders are waging offensive war on Buddhism not only underground but also above ground among the student public through their student agents.

Although the Buddhist people are peaceably going their ways bearing in mind their gentle religion and taking refuge in the three gems of Buddha—Dhamma—Sangha, the Burma Communists are restlessly fighting Buddhism with

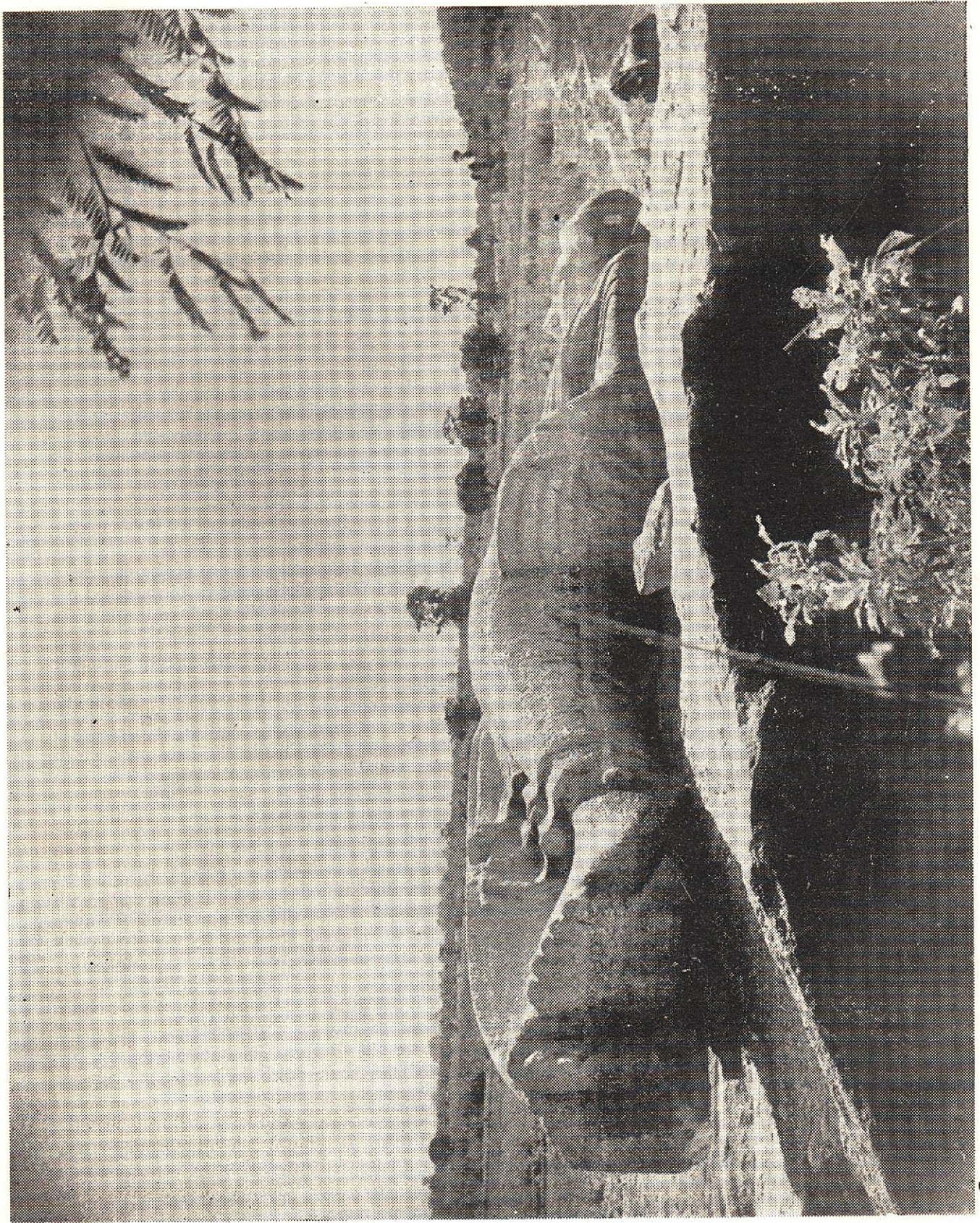
the help of above ground Communists and Communist students 24 hours a day.

If the Buddhist public put their faith entirely in the truth of their religion and think that their religion cannot be destroyed by any agency, they may have to think again. Even true religions cannot withstand for long the determined assaults of determined enemies. Therefore, the Buddhist clergy and laity who do not wish Buddhism to disappear from Burma should not be indifferent to the Communist threat.

The glaring historical evidence of the demise of Buddhism in India, the land of its birth, called the Middle Regions or Jambudipa, where the Buddha appeared, is there for them to remember. There, because the people were indifferent, Emperor Asoka himself had to revive Buddhism. Even so, in the course of centuries, the followers of Buddhism dwindled away until only sparse archaeological remains were left forlorn in the land over which Buddhism had held its gentle sway. The tens of thousands of wells and tanks dug by Emperor Asoka in honour of Buddhism are now lost in the mists of antiquity. Asokan pillars themselves set up to mark the hallowed spots connected with Buddhism now no longer mark those spots but are marking time in the narrow confines of archaeological museums to be gazed upon not by multitudes but only by stray research scholars in ones and twos.

A similar fate awaits Buddhism in Burma sooner or later if her great Buddhist public will not bestir themselves to protect it, defend and safeguard it, but let the Burma Communists poison the minds of the young and the adolescent against Buddhism as they are doing now.

The Buddhist clergy and laity of Burma who do not wish to see Buddhism fade away from Burma, beware of the fell work being perpetrated on Buddhism by the Burma Communists. Be indifferent no more.



Communists defile Statue of Buddha.

What Abomination, Ye PCP's!

Proclaiming the slogan "Religion is the opium of the people," the Burma Communists are wont to prove themselves anti-Buddhists in various ways. Plentiful have been the cases of desecration and sacrilege perpetrated by them enough to desolate the hearts of all Buddhists.

A case in point is the doings of the Communist White Band PCPs in Sagyin village area, Madaya township, Mandalay district. There was a noble piece of sculpture in Sagyin marble, a big reclining image of the Buddha at the foot of the Sagyin hill. This they destroyed with fire and violence, striking a terrible blow at the heart of every Buddhist.

Originally, these White Band PCPs were not Communists. They* belonged to the PVOs of Bogyoke Aung San. After the assassination of Bogyoke Aung San and the splintering of the PVOs, some became Communists, some became Socialists and the rest became White Band PCPs. Soon after Independence when the Communists went underground and started armed rebellion, the White Band PCPs followed them like sheep having no ideological line of their own to follow. But the Communist insurgents looked askance at them. They were spoken of as "the lost patriots," "teething puppies itching to bite," "fellow-travellers who came interfering in the revolutionary struggle."

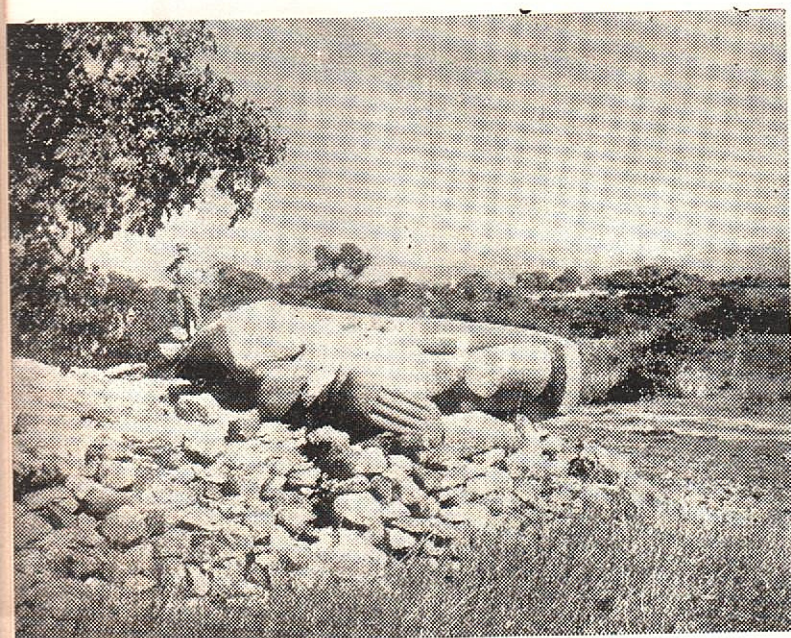
In no time they had to swallow Communism lock, stock and barrel, and prove themselves

Communists in name as well as in fact. Their conversion was so complete that even in the last stages, those who surrendered must needs declare that for the present they gave up armed insurgency but never would they give up the Communist ideology. They vowed at the Martyrs' Memorial to "march on towards world Communism." Presenting their party programme to the public at the City Hall, they declared openly that they would follow Marx-Leninism, take orders from the Soviet leaders, and strive to turn Burma ultimately into a Communist country.

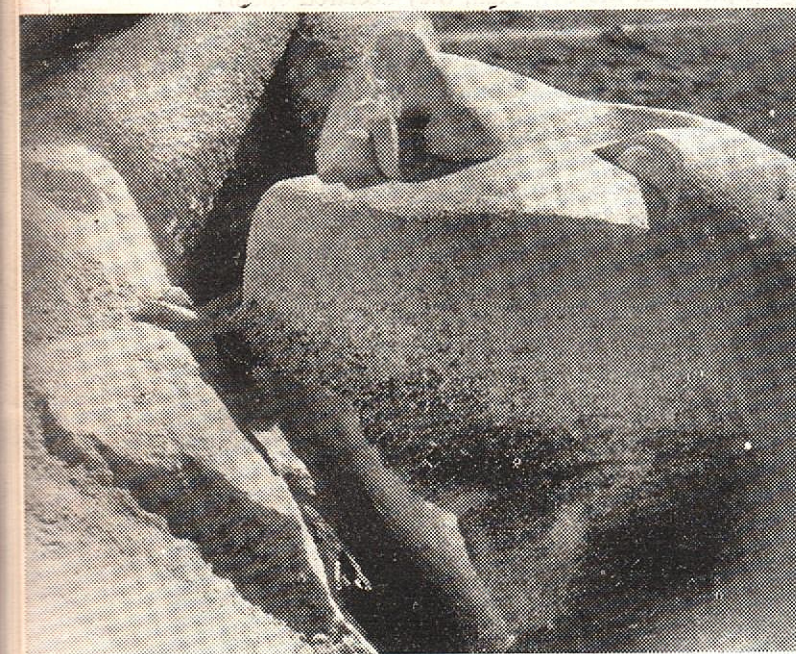
To be clear-cut anti-Buddhists, to be ruthless against religion, is a MUST for the PCPs who were so anxious to be true revolutionaries. So anxious were they to prove themselves true Communists that in their insurgent areas they left in ruins many monasteries, shrines, pagodas, all revered edifices of the Buddhists. One such desecration remains to wring the hearts of all Buddhists—the self-revealing handiwork of the PCPs who were so anxious to prove themselves Communists of the deepest dye.

* * * * *

Time—1956/ Place—Sagyin village area, Madaya township, Mandalay district/ State of the area—under the heel of the insurgents. The PCPs under ex-MP Bo Tin Maung, Bo Than Pe, Bo Min Naing, Bo Kyi Maung, held sway like absolute



Photos of Statues of the Buddha defiled and destroyed by the Communists near Madaya, north of Mandalay.



monarchy keeping the people of the area in constant terror of their guns.

There was in Sagyin village at the time a sixty-year-old Burmese sculptor by name U Po Kyi. Having discovered a great block of marble flawless and fit to be fashioned into the noblest image, he did not hesitate to put his genius to meritorious purpose. The result was one of the noblest achievements of the Burmese sculptor's art—a reclining Buddha measuring 18 cubits in length, height of the face $1\frac{2}{3}$ cubits, the right fore-arm on which the head rested 3 cubits, and the left arm 6 cubits long.

The finished work was under contract to be shipped to A-pyauk Town, Zalun Township in Henzada District, for the adoration of the people of the district at a cost of twenty thousand kyats to be defrayed by the rich man of A-pyauk U Pwa Gyi. A raft to carry it and big country-boats to tow the raft were in position waiting for the river to rise. Alas, the weight of the marble was so immense that all their efforts could not achieve more than turn the image over on its back. That contract being broken, U Ta Yè of Madaya approached U Sein Chaw, the Divisional Commissioner, at Mandalay to have the precious image transported to Mandalay at his expense. By paying for the image and its transportation may he gain great merit for his future existence.

The Commissioner U Sein Chaw, and the President of the Mandalay Municipality U Aung Nyunt, with adequate armed escort, visited Sagyin village to inspect the image and make arrangements for its transportation. After consultation with the village elders, the arrangements were finalised and the Commissioner's party returned to Mandalay.

Then, the PCP vandals, who knew what was afoot, resolved to destroy it that very night. They swathed the neck of the image with sackings soaked in kerosene oil and set fire to it. Although cracks appeared in the marble neck, the image was still whole. But these ghouls would not rest till their fell work was done. While the helpless villagers looked on in impotent rage, their hearts bleeding for the equally helpless image, the PCPs continued their orgy of iconoclasm till the head was severed and the supporting fore-arm lay in fragments. The villagers turned away in horror. The PCPs

celebrated their victory with unholy glee stamping all over the remains and banging their rifle-butts down on the marble. Then they had the effrontery to give anti-Buddhist lectures to the people in the village. They exhorted the villagers not to let themselves be bamboozled by the government who were using religion as a propaganda weapon and therefore instead to help and collaborate in every way to make the revolution a success !

The poor villagers of Sagyin never dared to report these terrible doings of the PCPs though their hearts were aching to do so. It was only after the surrender ceremony of the PCPs (ceremony indeed ! as if they were returning heroes) that full particulars of their reign of terror in Sagyin area became known.

That piece of PCP outrage in Sagyin was not only sacrilege but vandalism also. The loving care that our craftsmen and sculptors expended in building pagodas and temples, and in sculpturing Buddha-images, could not have been bought but was due to the spiritual urge and inward conviction of meritorious deed.

The sculptor U Po Kyi of Sagyin dedicated his art to the meritorious task of creating a perfect image of the Buddha from a perfect block of marble for the perfect adoration of all Buddhists who should behold it. The "perfect" Communists—the White Band PCPs—destroyed it committing both sacrilege and vandalism.

Poor U Ta Yè of Madaya as well as U Pwa Gyi of A-pyauk, whose hearts brimmed over with the meritorious wish of enabling their countrymen to adore the perfect image, suffered—as if their libation of good-will was poured on sand—grievous disappointment.

As for the people of the Sagyin village area, this crime of the PCPs will remain not only in their wounded hearts but also in the hearts of their children and grand-children. They had but to pray that elsewhere in Burma, people would not share their fate of being lorded over by the monster-children of Communism, the PCPs.



Photos of Statues of the Buddha defiled and destroyed by the Communists near Madaya, north of Mandalay.



831063

Statue of Buddha destroyed



Postscript

The Red Flag Communist Party of Burma, the White Flag Burma Communist Party, the People's Comrade Party and other crypto-Communists whose dastardly attacks on Buddhism we have described are now attacking Buddhism in market places and council chambers. Their supporters are now mouthing that their ideology is very similar to Buddhism; that just as the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism are materialistic in that they are built on the four basic elements of Matter, so also the ideology of Communism is based on the objective realities of Matter. They went so far as to refer to themselves as *Bodhisats*.

The Burma Communists and their fellow-travellers have now a scheme to destroy not only Buddhism but also other religions in Burma. Such organisations as **The League of the Militant Godless, the Central Anti-religious Commission and the Society for the Propagation of Political and Scientific Knowledge**, may become open and active institutions in Burma also.

That there is freedom of worship in Burma no one denies. But none of the millions of Buddhists in Burma will allow Communist chicanery to foist

a *pseudo* Buddhist materialism on them, especially after they had witnessed Buddhism scoffed, reviled, blasphemed and desecrated by the Burma Communists.

Those who say, in the same breath, that Buddhism is a crafty religion and that their ideology is very similar to Buddhism, are insulting not only the Dhamma but also the intelligence of their hearers. The Burma Communists who are now saying this are only asking to be put beyond the pale. By way of removing the dangers to the Dhamma, they and their supporters should really be put beyond the frontiers of Buddhist countries. Failing that, they should be shunned from afar.

How to protect the **Buddha-Dhamma** from these dangers should be the burden of discussion at the meetings and gatherings of practical Buddhists.

The publication of this pamphlet will not make the Burma Communists confess their errors. Oh no! They will employ other tactics to hoodwink the Buddhist public of Burma—such as lavish giving of alms and almsfood to the Buddhist monks and holding of “Shin Pyu” novitiating

ceremonies galore to persuade the holy ones into thinking that the Burma Communists are respecters of the Buddha and His Order of Monks.

They will issue counter-pamphlets to refute our truthful statements and to white-wash themselves. They will run ahead and bow and prostrate before the unsuspecting senior members of the Buddhist clergy. They will be there first to cry "thief" pointing their fingers at us. They are certain to do this *ad nauseum*. Worst of all, they will get

that section of the Buddhist monks which had come under their evil spell to plead their cause. Be that as it may, we are confident that the Buddhist monks as well as laymen—the entire Buddhist public will now be forewarned and forearmed against the anti-Buddhist manoeuvrings of Burma's heathen Communists and their incipient progeny.

Appamadena Sampadetha

Work out your own salvation with diligence.



GLOSSARY

Antaraya	... Obstacle; hindrance; danger; bar; prevention.	Red Flag Communists.	Originally belonging to the Burma Communist Party, they left it after a split in March 1946, led by Thakin Soe, and later went underground. Dubbed "Trotskyists" for their extreme orthodoxy in Communism.
Bikkhus	... Buddhist monks.		
Bodhisat	... Embryo Buddha.		
BCP	... Burma Communist Party, led by Thakin Than Tun, which went underground in March 1948.		
Dāna	... Gift; charity; alms; alms-giving.	Sangha	... The Buddhist Order of Bikkhus.
Dhamma	... Doctrine; morality; moral philosophy; wisdom; truth propounded by the Buddha in His discourses and conversations.	Samsara	... Endless round of rebirths; lit. 'faring on'.
Ji To conquer; to subdue.	Sabbha	... All; every; whole; entire.
Jinati	... Conquers; subdues.	Tripitaka	... The three divisions (lit. 'baskets') of the Buddhist Canon.
Nibbana	... The eternal reality.	Thakin Than Tun.	Leader of the Burma Communist Party whose avowed policy is to seize power by force of arms and to set up a People's Democratic Republic. Went underground with his followers in March 1948.
PVO	... People's Volunteer Organization sponsored by the late Bogyoke Aung San, and composed of resistance forces who played a leading part in driving the Japanese out of Burma. Disgruntled with the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), the premier national organization, and the Government, a section of the resistance forces known as White Band PVOs (as distinct from Yellow Band PVOs who stood by the AFPFL and the Government) went underground in July 1948 and made common cause with the Communists.	Thakin Soe	... Leader of the Red Flag Communist Party underground who consistently maintains an intransigent attitude towards the Independence of Burma in pursuance of the theory that any independence wrested from the hands of the Imperialists without a war is a sham.
PCP	... People's Comrade Party, the assumed name of the White Band PVO in the underground.	White Flag Communists.	Members of the Burma Communist Party underground led by Thakin Than Tun. Branded "Stalinists" for their Communism of a milder hue.

The Burmese Press



News Report : (April 26, 1959)

COMMUNIST THREAT TO BUDDHISM

In a report to the Venerable Sayadaws throughout Burma on the anti-Buddhist campaign being relentlessly waged by the Burma Communists in this country, the Director of Religious Affairs, U Sein, drew attention the other day to the serious threat which the Burma Communists are posing to the cause of the Sasana in Burma today.

Addressing himself to the Ven. Sayadaws over the BBS on Tuesday night (April 21), the Director of Religious Affairs said: "Venerable Sayadaws, may I, with profound respect, bring to your notice the fact that a violent campaign is being unceasingly conducted against the cause of Buddhism in this country by the Burma Communists both above and underground and that indoctrination classes to this end are being held by the Burma Communists at their secret party headquarters.

"From a pocket-book of notes seized from a young Communist cadre attending Communist indoctrination classes, it is gathered that the Buddha and the Dhamma have been reviled and attacked in the following terms:

'When the Buddha appeared 2,500 years ago, the world was in the age of slave labour.

Science had not yet developed. History was not yet ripe for the concept of liberation. Therefore, the Buddha had to think up a fantastic concept of liberation—there is Nibbana for you !'

'In this world, there can be no deliverance from suffering. To escape suffering, you must escape from the world. Born of this despair was the defeatist ideology of Nibbana.'

'It is not the mind which causes existence. It is existence which causes the mind. Therefore, it is existence and nothing else which causes the clinging. *A fortiori* the Buddha's teachings, beginning, middle and end, are dead wrong. The ideology of deliverance from suffering by escaping to Nibbana is among all fantasies the most extravagant.'

'Our party cannot accept Nirodha-Sacca (the Doctrine of Cessation of Suffering). So far from attempting to solve the problem of the origin of life, Buddhism forbids any attempt to seek after the origin of all forms of life on the plea that it does not lead to the Path to Nibbana, perhaps lest the discovery of the origin of life should reveal the impossibility of the cessation of suffering. Thus, our dialectical materialism and Buddhism are diametrically opposed.'

'A religion which has been processed to square with modern science is more crafty than simple old religions and therefore more harmful to the dispossessed masses. We must beware of such religions.'

"Ven. Sayadaws, in like manner, the Burma Communists have been boldly profaning the Buddha and His Teachings with the wildest of allegations imaginable. Copies of booklets entitled *Dhammantarāya* fully illustrated, and containing considerable anti-Buddhist blasphemy as indulged in by the Burma Communists, shall be presented for perusal of the Ven. Sayadaws after the Full Moon Day of *Tagu*, 1321 (B.E).

"Ven. Sayadaws, in view of the serious threat to the Sasana which the Burma Communists are posing today in this country, may I, with deepest respect, end with an appeal that timely admonition may, as an act of grace, be administered to Dayikas that they may keep to the right path and not go astray."

Editorial Views: (April 27, 1959)

COMMUNISM, DOCTRINE OF HATE

The Director of Religious Affairs the other day, and now the Ministries of Information and Defence have shown how intractable as a foe Communism is to the teachings of Buddha. And not to Buddhism alone, but to every known religion in this world, because Communism is an atheistic creed, founded on the rejection of all the essential doctrines of religion. The expose "Dhamma in Danger", which has been published in most newspapers, and which we publish today, is a useful document which should be read and preserved in every Buddhist home. It renders a truly great service because it demolishes once and for all the fallacy stated by one or two Burmese politicians that Marxism is not incompatible with Buddhism.

The authors of "Dhamma in Danger" have illustrated their warnings to the religious and lay Buddhists of Burma with facsimiles of Communist notes and writings in which Buddhism is denounced and reviled, and the Buddha derided as a charlatan, quack and impostor. The defilement and desecration of holy places, and the acts of vandalism and

sacrilege on the part of the Communist insurgents in smashing up images and statues, are touched upon, although the instances cited are by no means a complete catalogue of such outrages. What the Government has set out to prove, and succeeded in doing, is that the Communists do not merely deny Buddhism. They are taught to regard Buddhism with a burning hatred.

"Dhamma in Danger" shows how wrong the politicians are who find a resemblance between Buddhism and Marxism. These politicians themselves, while practising Buddhism, look for an accommodation with Marxism, but the Marxists will have none of them. Lenin (and Thakin Soe) has repudiated them in advance: "A religion which has been processed to square with modern science is more crafty than simple old religions and therefore more harmful to the dispossessed masses. We must beware of such religions." Consequently, all those Buddhists who still call themselves Marxists, who are forever trying to make excuses and apologies for Marxism, as a kind of second class Buddhism, show themselves to be ignorant of Buddhism and a fit target for Communist jibes and derision.

Then there are other Buddhists, even Buddhist leaders, who claim that, while they themselves recognise Marxism to be devoid of moral and ethical order, there is something appealing about Marxist economics. But what good is Marxist economics or any kind of economics once morality is made a superstructure to economics and therefore inconsequential? Communism claims that all economic exploitation is only an economic problem, and not a moral problem. All evil, they say, is due to economics which is as nonsensical as saying that all the unhappy marriages in the world are due to bad economics, when the facts prove that if the economic injustices were the sole cause of unhappiness, it would be the rich who would be happy, and the poor alone who would be miserable.

The Marxists are contradicting themselves every time they make a moral protest against exploiters, profiteers, capitalists, counter-revolutionaries, Trotskyites. Whence comes this moral wrath if reality be not moral? If all social phenomena are a moral, if there is no real distinction between good and evil in the nature of things, then why is

exploitation wrong, and why should not anyone commit injustices against his neighbour? Those who are enamoured of Marxist economics would be as hard put to it to explain this as those who look upon Marxism as being in some sense germane to Buddhism would be to explain why the hearts of Burmese Communists are always aglow with the hatred of Buddhism. The hatred that the Communists show towards Buddhism is the same

hatred they direct at all other religions. For anyone to say that there is freedom of worship in any Communist country is to be both ignorant and blind. Hundreds of thousands have perished whose only fault was that they believed in a doctrine of love instead of a doctrine of hate of an all-consuming kind—the kind of hate of which we are getting a foretaste in this country even before the Communists have seized power.



THE GUARDIAN

Editorial Views: (*April 25, 1959*)

MENACE TO RELIGION

The Information Department has recently produced a well-documented booklet with the title "Menace to Dhamma." It is a very timely book and fits in snugly with the conditions prevailing in this part of Asia. We are at present concerned with the future fate of the Buddhist State Tibet whose ruler had to flee and which is now being roughly handled by atheistic Communists with guns and troops. All this happened in Tibet in spite of the solemn guarantees of the Chinese suzerain that religion would be respected in Tibet and the country would enjoy autonomy.

"Menace to Dhamma" gives revealing facts that in Burma also, Buddhism would fare worse once the Burmese Communists could impose their rule over the country. The Burmese Communist leaders such as Thakin Soe and Thakin Than Tun are less subtle and more arrogant than their Chinese comrades, and right from the beginning when they were not anywhere near power they made known their thoughts of Buddhism. To Thakin Soe, Buddhism is escapism born from a sense of despair of the people that their salvation could only be obtained beyond this earthly life. If Thakin Soe comes into power and gives "salvation" to the people, we cannot have any doubt that he will consign Buddhism to total oblivion.

Thakin Than Tun is less dialectical and more practical in his approach to religion. He once told a former Minister, Saw San Po Thin, that if the Burma Communist Party came into power he would put to proletarian use all the gold of Shwedagon Pagoda which was lying "waste." We do not think this is an idle threat because once

the Communists come into power, their triumph will be so complete that none of us will be able to prevent them from doing anything they wish. Religious and public treasures are also considered legitimate booty by the Communists and they will do what they like with such treasures in the name of glorious revolution.

We hope that the book will serve to arouse the Buddhist clergy and laymen to a real sense of danger to their religion from those who think Marx is a better god and wish to destroy the teachings of Buddha as "escapism" and tangible symbols of Buddhism as wasted material resources. We hope that the book will also make the people aware of their religious duty to expose those Communists who have infiltrated into all spheres of our life. Above all, we need to remind ourselves all the time that Buddhism in its long history has never been threatened with extinction by a foe such as Communism the power of which is world-wide. In the past, it was possible to separate State from Religion, but with Communism once in control of the State, Religion and its free practice will not be tolerated.

Editorial Views: (*April 26, 1959*)

DHAMMA IN DANGER

The Ministries of Information and Defence have jointly put out a pamphlet under the title, DHAMMA IN DANGER, revealing the Communist menace to Buddhism and also exposing the stark abomination that Communism really is. The acts of desecration perpetrated by the Communists to the religion and religious edifices were either confessed to by the surrendered Communists or found recorded in note-books kept by the Communist cadres at the indoctrination classes.

Since 1942, the Red Flag Communist party leader Thakin Soe held such classes for many young Burmans who were ardent anti-Imperialists. These indoctrinated young people are now engaged in anti-Buddhist, anti-Constitution, anti-Burmese activities, both above and underground, like the flesh of Burmania's flesh, turned cancerous, destroying its own begetter. Some of them, after years of apostasy as Burma Communists, have in the end seen through the false god at whose feet they had been worshipping and have confessed their error and are now atoning for their past sins.

In the underground, Thakin Soe was called U Tun Wei or Ko U, or just Sayagyi. In 1944 he was running a bureau called "Answers to Questions" at the secret Party Headquarters.

In answer to a question: "Is it true that the fundamentals of Buddhism and the Communist dialectical materialism square with each other?" Thakin Soe replied as follows:

"The ideology of Nibbana is an ideology of despair. Despairing of freedom in this world, in this existence, it seeks escape from this world and this life into Nibbana.

Of all the fanciful ideologies this Nibbana is the most fanciful with its basic doctrine of Two—(Avijjha and Tanha) Ignorance and Clinging, the middle doctrine of (Paticca Samuppada) Dependent Origination and the end doctrine of (Nirodha) Cessation of Suffering.

So far from attempting to solve the problem of the beginning of life, it forbids any attempt to find the beginning of all forms of life, arguing that it has nothing to do with the path to Nibbana, perhaps for fear that the discovery of the beginning of life will reveal the impossibility of the cessation of rebirth. Therefore, our dialectical materialism and the fundamentals of Buddhism are poles apart.

'Religion,' say Marx and Engels, 'is the opium of the people.'

Only by liquidating Capitalism which is throttling the progress of productive forces, and thus establishing necessary material environment, can religion be attenuated to disuse and gradual disappearance.

A Burmese politician once sought to prove that Marxism supported Buddhism by pointing out examples where Buddhism squares with the discoveries of modern science. To such, Lenin had given the warning that a religion which had been processed to square with modern science is more crafty than simple old religions and therefore more harmful to the proletarian class."

Pointing out the dangers of Communism towards Buddhism, the pamphlet stated:

"If ever the Communists come into power! With their intransigent attitude towards religion, 'the enemy of the people', and ruthless war against Buddhism, the fate of Buddhism, Buddhist institutions and people in this country is imponderable.

"If they come into power! Already the Communists of Burma are calumniating the Buddha, the Sangha, the Buddhist traditions, and traducing the best tenets of the Buddha's teaching, hell-bent on the destruction of that gentle influence which is the foundation of our civilisation."

Articles: (April 25, 1959)

COMMUNISM AND BUDDHISM

by NGA PAW U

It would appear that in the blue-print for a Communist take-over in any target country, the undermining and disintegration of any dominant religious influence in that country assumes a most primary and vital role. As in most other countries faced with a parallel problem of Communism seeking to undermine the national religion, our own peculiar brand of Burmese Communists have striven might and main to tumble the pillar of Buddhism in this country.

The threat to Buddhism in Burma lies not in any other creed or religion but that of Communism. The Burmese Communists, both White and Red Flag, have long advocated and surreptitiously sought to spread their anti-religious themes in their resolute attempt to disrupt the sway that Buddhism exerts over the people of the country; and thus be able to substitute their own alien creed.

A brief study of the Communist attempt to subvert Buddhism in Burma may not be amiss here. Like in most other parallel countries, there have been two different approaches utilised by the Communists to undermine Buddhism in Burma. The first has been a frontal approach or attack relating to the issue of Nirvana. The second has been an indirect approach harping on the alleged similarity between Marxism and Buddhism.

The first attack touches on the point of Nirvana which, according to accepted Buddhist teaching, is attainable through study and meditation. But this would require a withdrawal from the world, and as the Communists point out, this would make it impossible for the man who has to work to earn a living for his family. Hence, salvation or Nirvana would be possible only for the idle rich, the class that exploits the common people, and also for those who live parasitically in monasteries at the expense of those who toil, unproductive members of society, who serve only to act as a drag upon the economy of the people.

In actual fact, the monastery system has never been regarded as any form of burden, for the monks perform a yeoman service in the educational and religious life of the country. Consequently, for the Communists, this frontal attack has not served to be in any way effective, since the high regard for the monks held by most people makes them quite resistant to any kind of exaggerated propaganda tending to debunk the clergy.

The indirect approach has been along the similarities that are alleged to exist between Buddhism and Communism. In essence, Buddhism does not believe in a personal god or any dependence for salvation upon the supernatural. Man is expected to depend upon his own intelligence and effort; and by his scientific understanding and control of the physical forces of the world and the manipulation of the social forces, he is expected to work out his own salvation. The Communists have sought to belabour this point.

Again, the true Buddhist does not pray, as is understood by most theistic people, for he is expected to be above the superstitious folk beliefs that surround most religions of the world. The Communists have sought avidly to identify themselves with this aspect. And, finally, the Communists are quite wont to point out that Buddhism

at the clergy or Sangha level is indeed a form of Communism, a society in which distinctions of class are not permitted.

There are, hence, not a few superficial likenesses between the two systems; yet, this, while having some softening up effect upon some people, has not appeared to be quite very effective. Instead, it has brought about a reaction. It has caused many a thoughtful Buddhist to study the subject more thoroughly, and then to reach the inevitable conclusion that there are indeed many deep fundamental differences which quite overshadow the superficial similarities.

In Burma, many are the attempts that have been made to co-relate Communism and Buddhism or to identify Marxism with Buddhism; and here, of course, is joined an issue of the greatest importance. Are Buddhism and Marxism compatible? Despite these valiant efforts made to appear that they are so, it yet remains an irrefutable and inescapable fact that simply on the basis of the philosophical plane alone, the two are in violent contradistinction.

It remains, in essence, that if one is a Buddhist in the true philosophical sense, then one cannot be a Marxist, a dialectical materialist. Marxism may be necessary for the satisfaction of material needs (and this even is disputable), but there are still spiritual needs to be satisfied and for these Marxism does not have the answer nor can science fully satisfy them. It has been pointed out that only Buddhist philosophy can provide an answer for such spiritual liberation. And that only when there is this satisfaction of spiritual needs can solace in life be found. And that, only then, can liberation from this mundane world be found.

On the more practical plane, the distinction between the semblance of Communism allegedly discernible in the Sangha and that of Marxism is rather obvious. The former is wholly voluntary and designed to aid in the eradication of all the various forms of craving; while that of Marxism remains purely one of compulsion. One may leave the Sangha at will but one may not escape the imposed Communism of Marxism without fear or impunity.

Furthermore, as various scholars and authorities have pointed out, the idea of a classless society,

that ideal of Marxism, imposes an artificial limitation on the living and developing organism which is in opposition to its functions as an instrument of evolution.

Through such insidious methods have the Communists in Burma sought to undermine Buddhism in the country. First, the all-out attack and, when that failed, to fall back on that age-old strategy "If you can't fight them, join them." Through such insidious methods have the Communists sought to impose their will and creed on the people of Burma by attempting to subvert and to destroy the bonds of religion that play a most dominant role in the life of the people of the country.

Right from its very inception, Communism in Burma has sought to wean the masses away from the controlling influence of Buddhism, through abuse and cajolery, through force and pseudo-intellectual reasoning.

It is most encouraging then to note in this context that this threat that the Burmese Communists pose to the cause of religion, to the cause of Buddhism in Burma, is now being most opportunely

and most vividly exposed in a publication distributed by the Information Department of the Government. In well developed and well authenticated articles, the "Pyidaungsutha", a Burmese language weekly bulletin, has devoted its April 22 issue to reveal and publicise fully the basic attitudes and sentiments expressed by our contemporary Communist high priests in Burma in their abuse and attacks on Buddhism.

It is a certainty that this remarkable issue of the publication will mark another significant step in the fight against the Communist insurgents in Burma, for the articles will leave but no iota of doubt amongst readers that Buddhism indeed faces a great peril should the Communists ever succeed in having any kind of say in the affairs of the country.

Nation-wide distribution of this publication to reach every corner of the country so as to acquaint all the peoples of Burma with the Communist menace to Buddhism in this country should be accorded all encouragement if our pagodas and monasteries are to remain inviolate from the Communist scourge.





NEW TIMES OF BURMA

Editorial Views : (*April 26, 1959*)

THE GENTLE AND THE VIOLENT

The doctrine of loving kindness or Myitta which is the foundation of Buddhism is a gentle doctrine, and just as nature abhors a vacuum, so also Buddhism abhors violence in any of its forms such as hatred, bloodshed or unkindness even in spirit. Communism, as the Burmese Buddhists see with their own eyes, has been the alpha and omega of violence in all its unrepenting forms. The cult of the gun is the means, the violent means to an end, the end of hatred, bloodshed and unkindly forces. If the Buddhists are imbued with loving compassion on one another and their contacts, the Burmese Communists can not find shelter. In the reverse way also, the Burmese Buddhists can find no refuge in the company of Communists whose targets of material progress miss the rationalisation of spiritual solace. No wonder therefore that Communists in Buddhist countries have either to destroy Buddhism or get themselves destroyed. The history of Burmese Communist uprising for the last ten years is a living chapter on this epic struggle between the gentle and the brute.

To the Communists whose motive is material domination, the finer points of civilization are immaterial. These Communists are therefore the "Deik-Htis", the "Ah-yi-gyis" of the twentieth century, blind to their shameless acts and bent only on their fleshy pursuits. These Deik-htis and Ah-yi-gyis who call themselves the Communists prey upon the community not by any virtue of their own but by bullying and whenever possible by resort to force and violence. To the gentle

Buddhists, the problem of these twentieth century Ah-yi-gyis is two-fold. First is to protect the gentle people from the harm of these violent men. Secondly, to expose the real, factual nature of these Ah-yi-gyis so that the youthful generation will be forewarned.

The tactics of these Ah-yi-gyis are rather crude because they pander after the crude forms of life. They build their doctrine of material salvation on universal poverty and inequality of opportunity and they hope to capitalise on the fact that in a given society the working class is greater numerically than the propertied class. To achieve their material goal they utilise the redistribution of material wealth as the bait and urge the proletariat, the have-nots, to turn the whole social order upside down. Since the gentle art of loving kindness pervades the Buddhists who believe in justice, equality and good conscience they either let the mischief-mongers have their way or laugh at their profound ignorance of spiritual and ethical values. This is the danger that faces the gentle Buddhists today.

The brotherhood of Buddhist disciples, the Sanghas, faces the same dangers, but in an added jeopardy. The Sanghas form a distinct class of leadership, the visual symbol of the perfect life or at least the method of attempting for such a perfect life. The Ah-yi-gyis who style themselves as the Communists and sometimes as the Socialists too, find the brotherhood of Sanghas a stumbling block to their materialistic schemes. They therefore want to usurp the Sanghas' privileged position in society in order to influence that society. Unfortunately, these Ah-yi-gyis lack one vital

qualification which the Buddhist Sanghas possess in abundance. These Communist Ah-yi-gyis want to do charity with the properties and wealth of other peoples if necessary by force, whereas the Buddhist brotherhood give nothing but blessings when they see or hear the voluntary communisation or redistribution of private wealth. The gentle and the brute can easily be distinguished but in a Buddhist country like Burma where the gentle art of love is open and unarmed, the chances for success for the brute force are greater. To be forewarned therefore is to be forearmed against these dangers.

Editorial Views : (April 27, 1959)

DHAMMANTARĀYA

Shocking allegations are made by the Burma Communists against Buddhism. These are revealed in a compact pocket-book of notes belonging to a young Communist who had been indoctrinated previously but later abandoned the underground world. However, there are many indoctrinated young people now engaged in vicious activities to destroy Buddhism, and also the Constitution.

The more the pages of this pocket-book are studied, more terrible things against Buddhism are found. For instance, it is said that religion is the "Opium of the people and Buddhism is opium of the worst kind." It is impossible for the Buddhist people to remain unperturbed now, and ignore the terrible danger besetting them and their religion.

The vicious activities of the BCP must be exposed and the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Defence have now jointly published the translation of the pocket-book of notes belonging to the young Communist.

Letters to the Editor : (April 25, 1959)

Thein Hla, Railway Quarters, Insein

COMMUNIST THREAT TO BUDDHISM

Most of us, perhaps, may have read from time to time heart-rending accounts of how and to what extent religion has been suppressed either overtly or covertly by Communists in countries under Communist regimes. Various publications have come out, all from abroad, which invariably point

to the irrefutable fact that a vigorous, unrelenting campaign against religion has been waged, and religious persecution ruthlessly and systematically carried out in all countries, whether behind the Iron Curtain or the Bamboo Curtain.

Despite this serious menace which Communism poses to religion, it is surprising that scarcely a publication worth the name had appeared in Burma to enable the public to assess the basic attitude adopted by our Burmese Communists towards Buddhism, the national religion of the land, during these past twelve years since Communism, that most dreaded of all political creeds, first gained a foothold in this fair country of ours.

It is therefore most heartening to note that a national publication to fill a long-felt need has at long last appeared which in no uncertain terms, exposes fearlessly and truthfully, the threat that our Burmese Communists hold out to the cause of Buddhism in Burma. It is the "Pyidaungsutha," a fortnightly bulletin, of April 22 issue, published jointly by the Directorate of Information, Ministry of Information, and the Directorate of Education and Psychological Warfare, Ministry of Defence.

The current issue of "Pyidaungsutha" is not a commonplace, matter-of-fact publication that should be brushed aside casually as of no consequence under the stress and strain of this workaday world, but one which deserves to be read between the lines by all good Buddhists, solicitous for the Buddha Sasana.

The publication, which includes fully substantiated articles with photostats and photographs to illustrate the Burmese Communists' wild attacks against Buddhism, throws much light on the way our Burmese Communists feel about the dominating influence which Buddhism exerts over the social, political and economic life of the people of this country, and doubtless, provides much food for thought, especially in view of the ceaseless anti-Buddhist campaign being conducted by our Burmese Communists in the country.

Highlighting the fanatical and hostile attitude of the Burmese Communists towards the Buddhist religion, the "Pyidaungsutha" has brought to light several instances where our Burmese Communists have openly and heretically reviled and attacked the Teachings of the Buddha with utmost blasphemy.

To cite but one outstanding instance, which gives us the shivers, Thakin Than Tun, top leader of the Burma Communist Party is quoted as saying to the Karen leader Saw San Po Thin: "There is a lot of gold lying waste in that Shwedagon Pagoda. If ever I should come into power, I would seize all this gold and use it for the country."

Many are the incidents recorded where blasphemous attacks on Buddhism by the Burmese Communists in Burma have been unceasingly launched almost in the same breath. For instance, Buddhism has been referred to by them as "Opium of the worst kind," and the Buddha as a charlatan, an impostor and a superlative quack who for forty-five years preached nothing but propaganda which bound the people to their misery.

Nirodha-Sacca (the Doctrine of Cessation of Suffering), they say, is a mere figment of imagination, while Nibbana is all nonsense.

What has wrung our hearts and aroused our ire the most in the "Pyidaungsutha" is a vivid

and authentic account, fully illustrated, of how the PCPs accepting the Communist doctrine underground, had desecrated a big reclining marble image of the Buddha in 1956 at Sagyin village, in Madaya township, Mandalay district.

This and many other acts of sacrilege perpetrated by our Burmese Communists have provided convincing proof that the Burmese Communists have all along been waging an all-out war against Buddhism and all that it stands for, in this country.

We, as good Buddhists, should no longer look on with folded arms and remain indifferent to this greatest menace which Communism constitutes to our religion. We would therefore appeal with all the emphasis at our command to members of the Sangha, on whom the heavy responsibility of safeguarding the Sasana rests, and the Buddhist laymen alike to join together and combat in time the serious menace which Communism poses to Buddhism and before it is too late.





The Burman

Editorial Views : (*April 24, 1959*)

THREAT TO BUDDHISM

(PART I)

We are given to understand that the Communist insurgents and their aboveground confreres are conducting training courses wherein they blaspheme the Buddha and attack the Buddha-Dhamma wholesale. In this connection U Sein, Director of Religious Affairs, stated as follows: "The Communists claim Buddhism to be founded about 2,500 years ago when human beings were at the slave-level, when science had not yet been developed and when history was still in its infancy. They also claim that Buddhism was a form of escapism from the worldly ills. According to the Burmese Communists, none can escape from worldly sufferings and 'that men may attain Freedom after death' is only wishful thinking. For use in their training classes, they issue a textbook wherein many sacrilegious passages about Buddhism appear."

As dialectical materialists, they reject Buddhism on the ground that it is detrimental to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. The materialist outlook means that Matter, external reality, is regarded as primary, and Mind as secondary, as something that develops on the basis of Matter. It follows from this that man's physical existence, and therefore the ways in which it is preserved, comes before the ideas which man forms of his own life and methods of living. In other words, practice comes before theory. Man got himself a living long before he began to have ideas about it. But also the ideas, when he developed

them, were associated with his practice; that is to say, theory and practice ran together. And this was so not only in the early stages, but at all stages. The practical ways in which men get their living are the basis of their ideas. Their political ideas rise from the same root; their political institutions are formed in the practice of preserving the system of production, and not at all on the basis of any abstract principles. The institutions and ideas of each age are a reflection of the practice in that age. They do not have an independent existence and history, developing, so to speak, from idea to idea, but they develop when the material mode of production changes. A new custom takes the place of the old custom, and gives rise to new ideas.

In the "Anti-Duhring," Engels stated: "We therefore reject every attempt to impose on us any moral dogma whatsoever as an eternal, ultimate and for ever immutable moral law on the pretext that the moral world too has its permanent principles which transcend history and the differences between nations. We maintain on the contrary that all former moral theories are the product, in the last analysis, of the economic stage which society had reached at that particular epoch. And as society has hitherto moved in class antagonisms, morality was always a class morality; it has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class has become powerful enough, it has represented the revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed. That in this process there has on the whole been progress in morality, as in all other branches of human knowledge, cannot be doubted. But we have not yet passed beyond class morality. A

really human morality which transcends class antagonisms and their legacies in thought becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class contradictions but has even forgotten them in practical life."

Editorial Views : (*April 25, 1959*)

THREAT TO BUDDHISM

(PART II)

On October 2, 1920 Lenin addressed the 3rd Congress of the Russian Young Communist League as follows:

"Is there such a thing as Communist ethics? Is there such a thing as Communist morality? Of course, there is. It is often made to appear that we have no ethic of our own; and very often the bourgeoisie accuse us, Communists, of repudiating all ethics. This is a method of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we repudiate ethics and morality?

In the sense that it is preached by the bourgeoisie, who derived ethics from God's commandments. Or instead of deriving ethics from the commandments of God, they derived them from idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's commandments. We repudiate all morality derived from non-human and non-class concepts. We say that it is a deception, a fraud in the interests of landlords and capitalists. We say that our morality is entirely ordained to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality is derived from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. The class struggle is still continuing. We subordinate our Communist morality to this task. We say: morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the toilers around the proletariat, which is creating a new Communist society . . . We do not believe in an eternal morality."

The Marxist ethic is strictly materialist and naturalistic. Man is the product of Nature and is bound by Nature's laws; and it is in accordance with these laws, and not with dreams and ideals, that society develops. The basis of the

Marxist ethic is thus "the concrete human situation" in which the conditions of production are the determining factor. Hence, the Marxist ethic is simply the expression of the desires of the workers.

Many people are under the impression that the Burmese Communists are irreligious or atheists; but they are neither. They have their own ethics and so they are not without any Faith. Atheism, on the other hand, does not claim that it has solved all the questions of the universe, but it does claim that it has discovered the approach and learned the method of solving them. It has dedicated itself to the passionate quest for the truth. So we find that Atheism is very much different from the Marxist ethic.

According to Buddhism, since the Burmese Communists reject kamma and its resultant-effect, Nirodha-sacca (the Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering) and Nibbana, they are Niyata-michaditthis. They are Nihilists, because they assert that any belief in good action and its reward is a mere delusion and that after death no further life would follow. This Wrong View was once maintained by Ajita, a third contemporary of the Buddha.

It is now abundantly clear that the Burmese Communists have their own ethics and that they are not professing Buddhism. We believe that most of the followers of these Communists are Buddhists and that they would not readily accept the Communist ethic. If the Buddhist monks and laity combine together and instruct their disciples and near relatives not to accept the Marxist ethic, inasmuch as it is diametrically opposite to the Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha, the situation will become very much improved.

Editorial Views : (*April 26, 1959*)

DETERMINED ASSAULTS

Determined assaults against Buddhism are being made by its determined enemies—the Burmese Communists and other parties below and above ground who subscribe to Marxist theories.

In a series of articles we have taken pains to describe who the Communists, both the Red Flag and the White Flag varieties, as also crypto-Communists going under various names, are. We have shown that Communists are, what we call,

materialists. We have also pointed out how very different Communism is from Buddhism and how the two systems can never be reconciled.

If the Burma Communists keep to their new-found religion in Communism, it would be well; but the facts show that they are at the moment waging a relentless war against Buddhism and are at the moment attempting to undermine, by methods they have devised, the very foundation on which Buddhism rests. It has now come to a point when, unless the Buddhists meet Communist threats to Buddhism, the Buddha Sasana itself is threatened with extinction.

Thakin Soe, leader of the Red Flag Communists, quoting Lenin, told his young and gullible disciples, "a religion processed to square with modern science is more crafty than simple old religions and therefore more harmful to the dispossessed masses. We must beware of such religions." Could we, who are brought up on Buddhist culture and the gentle gospel of the Great Buddha, afford to be smug when determined assaults are being made by determined enemies?

In a booklet titled "Dhammantarāya" (Buddhism In Danger) and translated into English jointly by the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of the Union of Burma, facts based on documentary evidence to show how the Burma Communists are going all out to destroy Buddhism are given. The booklet raises a note of warning against assaults made by Communists and urges, "how to protect the Buddha Dhamma from these dangers should be the burden of discussion at the meetings and gatherings of practical Buddhists, for Buddhists should no longer remain smug especially when the Burma Communists and their fellow-travellers have now a scheme to destroy not only Buddhism but also other religions in Burma."

The booklet further warns that if we are not careful and meet the Communist challenge in an effective manner "such organisations as the League of Militant Godless, the Central Anti-religious Commission and the Society for Propagation of Political and Scientific Knowledge, may become open institutions in Burma also."

The moral, therefore, for all ardent Buddhists as well as all those who profess one form of religious belief or other, is clear, we should say.

Editorial Views : (April 27, 1959)

PROTECT THE DHAMMA

More than eighty per cent of Burma's population are Buddhists, the remainder being Christians, Hindus, Muslims or Animists. That being the case, they all share some form of belief in a spiritual law and a moral controlling principle in life. But there are some Burmans who are actively hostile to Buddhism and who write and speak against it at every opportunity. They are the Burmese Communists who blaspheme the Buddha and repudiate the Buddha Dhamma. They alleged that Gotama the Buddha was a charlatan, an impostor and not a scientist and that he invented Nibbana as a face-saving ideology. Hence, the disturbing question, "Is Buddhism true?"

There are many facts known to science yet still unexplained, which are fully understandable in the light of the Buddha Dhamma, if not technically at least psychologically and philosophically. One among these is the relationship between mind and body, which only Buddhism can explain in a manner acceptable to both the student of parapsychology and the physiologist. In the Abhidhamma (Higher Doctrine), there is a minute account of the course of cognition through the five doors of senses. At a certain stage of the process, a mental activity arises which is in the nature of a creative impulse, for it projects outward into the physical world and operates upon matter to produce its results. This impulse is called Kamma, or volitional action. The psychologist who cannot explain what place morality occupies, or should occupy, in his study of the mind, would be thoroughly enlightened on this vital point if he were to apply the Abhidhamma to the facts he already knows.

It could be demonstrated, therefore, that if there are any Burman Buddhists like the Burman Communists who have lost their faith in Buddhism, it is not because of intellectual doubt. It is not because of that spirit of independent enquiry and intellectual emancipation that has made atheists and materialists in the West. It must be in the first place due to an imperfect understanding of Buddhism, and in the second to a too slavish veneration for Western materialists.

The whole spirit of the Buddha Dhamma is essentially reasonable and scientific, and if the master-minds of modern science would but apply themselves to studying it objectively, influenced neither by blind religious faith nor by the Marxist ethic, we might expect to see great advances in human thought. The far more important thing to us here and now, is the exploration of the universe within ourselves. It is through not properly understanding our own minds, the source of all actions, that we have placed our world in such grave danger by grasping scientific techniques that we cannot control. Buddhism is not only true, but its truth can be proved. And in its proving lies the greatest objective of human endeavour, the realisation of Nibbana in this very life.

Marxism bases all its theories on the materialist conception of the world, and from this standpoint it tries to discover the laws which govern the world and—since man is a part of reality—the laws which govern the movement of human society. And it tests all its discoveries, all its conclusions, by actual experience, rejecting or modifying conclusions and theories which do not fit the facts.

The dialectical approach also sees that nothing in the world is really static, that everything is moving, changing, either rising and developing or declining and dying away. All scientific knowledge confirms this. The earth itself is in constant change. Owing to this Marxist concept, many people wrongly say that Marxism is somewhat similar to Buddhism. In fact, it is not; and there is a world of difference between the two. Since the Burmese Communists reject Buddhism *in toto* they are not Buddhists at all, and as such, they will dare to say or do anything against Buddhism.

It is therefore incumbent on all of us, Buddhists, to instruct our relatives and friends not to accept the Marxist ethic or the "Communist religion."

Editorial Views : (May 4, 1959)

BUDDHISM CANNOT BE EQUATED WITH COMMUNISM

It has been regarded as the very essence of the Communist creed that in the society all men would be equal. But when we behold this world and think about the destinies of men, it will appear

to us as if everything in nature was unjust. The following questions may then follow: "Why is one man rich and powerful but another poor and distressed? Why is one man all his life well and healthy, but another from his very birth sickly or infirm? Why is one man endowed with attractive appearance, intelligence and perfect senses, while another is repulsive and ugly, an idiot, blind, or deaf and dumb? Why is one child born amidst utter misery and amongst wretched people, and brought up as a criminal, while another child is born amidst plenty and comfort, of noble-minded parents, and enjoys all the advantages of kindly treatment and the best mental and moral education? Why does one man, often without the slightest effort, succeed in all his enterprises, while another fails in all his plans? Why can one man live in luxury, while another man has to live in poverty and distress? Why is one man happy, but another unhappy? Why does one man enjoy long life, while another in the prime of his life is carried away by death?"

From our own experience we find that men are unequal in their abilities—some are more gifted than others, some stronger in body, mind and character. Their personal circumstances are unequal—some are single while others have large families to care for, some may be stricken by accident or ill-health. People are also unequal in their tastes and temperaments—some ask much more of life than others, some have wider interests or are more energetic and adventurous.

Why is this so? Why do such differences exist in nature? These questions are satisfactorily answered by Buddhism. According to the Teaching of the Buddha, none of the above circumstances and conditions that constitute the destiny of a being can come into existence without a previous cause and the presence of a number of necessary conditions. Good or evil volitional actions or Karmas, produced in former birth, are the root-causes of good or evil destiny in a later birth. No organic entity, physical, can come into existence without a previous cause, *i.e.*, without a preceding congenial state out of which it has developed. Thus, the true course of the birth of a being, together with its character and destiny, goes back to the Karma-volitions produced in a former birth.

Marxism regards human beings and therefore human society, as a part of nature. Man's origin is therefore to be found in the development of the world; Man developed out of previous forms of life, in the course of whose evolution thought and conscious action made their appearance. This means that matter, reality that is not conscious, "existed before mind", reality that is conscious. But this also means that matter, external reality, exists independently of the mind. According to the materialist outlook, matter, external reality is regarded as primary, and mind as secondary, as something that develops on the basis of matter.

Since Communism rejects Kamma, Dependent Origination and Nibbana, it is evident Buddhism cannot be equated with Communism. Again, in his "Communism and Christianity", Martin D'Arcy writes: "Communism has been called a religion, and in so far as it has a creed which is wholeheartedly believed, the name is not unjustified. What the Apostle's Creed is for Christianity, the Communist Manifesto is to its followers, a call to belief and action. Both creeds claim to give an answer to the chief problems which agitate man—his individual and social life, his origin and destiny." Thus we see that Communism is a new and scientific religion, and so it is impossible to say that Buddhism can be equated with Communism.

Columnist: (April 28, 1959) "*Burmese Viewpoint*"

BURMA COMMUNISTS INSULT BUDDHA

Burma is a Buddhist country because 85 per cent of the people profess Buddhism. Buddhism was founded by Lord Buddha 2,500 years ago. As the Burma Communist Party has insulted Buddha and the Laws of Righteousness preached by Buddha it is tantamount to insulting the people of Burma. The Communists say that Buddhism is opium of the worst kind and that Buddhism cannot liberate the people from the world's ills, meaning that the Buddha was a charlatan, superlative quack, who for 45 years preached nothing but propaganda which bound the people to their misery. Lord Buddha, the Communists say, was the people's enemy Number One. These statements coming

from the Communists who profess no religion and know nothing about the Dhamma are a challenge to the Burmese Buddhist Community in the Union. The Communist underground are in fact sinners of the worst type and for them to criticize the founder of one of the greatest religions of the world would be sheer madness. The roots of Buddhism had become stable and strong in the country and no one, leave alone the sinners like the Communists, can shake the tree of Buddhism. By their insult to Buddha and His Laws, the Burma Communist have become enemy Number One of the whole Buddhist community of the Union.

Letters to the Editor: (May 3, 1959)

Thein Khin, 453, Maha Bandoola Street.

COMMUNIST THREAT TO SASANA

May I, through the columns of your esteemed paper, express my deep sense of appreciation for your recent successive editorial comments regarding the Communist menace to the Buddha Sasana in this country.

As you have rightly observed, determined assaults against Buddhism are being made by its determined enemies—the Burma Communists—below and above ground, who subscribe to Marxist theories. This is amply borne out by "Dhamman-tarāya" (Dhamma in Danger), the booklet recently published jointly by the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Defence, which has provided incontrovertible proof, if proof were needed, that the Burma Communists will not scruple at every opportunity to commit acts of vandalism and sacrilege in defiling and desecrating the Buddha images and statues and other holy places.

That our Burmese Communists will go to any length to undermine the very foundations on which Buddhism rests cannot be doubted any more since the creed of Communism denies religion. By heaping insults upon Lord Buddha whom they dubbed a charlatan, an impostor, a day-dreamer and public enemy Number One, and publicly profaning His noble Teachings, the Burma Communists are making enemies of the entire devout Buddhist public in this country, and are in fact courting trouble.

At any rate, it would appear that the all-out war against Buddhism being relentlessly waged by the Burma Communists has in a way served as an eye-opener to the dangers with which the Buddha Sasana is faced today in this country.

In the face of this serious threat to the Sasana, shall we, professing ourselves to be Buddhists, good and true, complacently and snugly sit tight, closing our eyes to the anti-Buddhist activities of these heathen Communists and suffer the Sasana to fade out under our very nose? Or shall we meet this Communist menace squarely and make short work of it that our Sasana may be saved from eventual extinction?

The matter is one of urgency which calls for concerted and sustained efforts on the part of the Buddhist clergy and laity to combat in time the growing danger that Communism poses to Buddhism in this country and thus save our Sasana from its sworn enemies—the Burma Communists and their fellow-travellers with their burning hatred of the sublime Dhamma.

Appamadana Sampadetha.

Articles: (*April 26, 1959*)

THE COMMUNIST MENACE TO BUDDHISM IN BURMA

by MAUNG TIN TUN

Thakin Than Tun, leader of the Burmese Communists, once pointed to the Shwedagon and commented to Saw San Po Thin, erstwhile Karen leader of some consequence: "There's lot of gold lying awaste in that pagoda. Now, if I had my way I would take away all that gold from all the pagodas in Burma and use it for other purposes."

This and many other revealing incidents indicate the basic attitude of the Burmese Communists to the cause of Buddhism in our country. Marx and Engels had decreed the new gospel that religion only served as a sort of opiate for the people; and so, accordingly, all line-toeing Burmese Communists felt it their bounden duty to destroy every vestige of religion and Buddhism in the country.

Thakin Soe, another top-ranking Burmese Communist, has been violently attacking Buddhism in his "celebrated" classes on Communism that began since 1942. Communist aspirants of these classes graduated when they could boldly and

irreverently call out to any of the figures of the Buddha that abound all over Burma: "I say, Gotama it's time to get up, you know."

The beguiled PVOs eventually accepted the Communist doctrine after a few misguided years in the jungle. The PVOs were fast in latching on to the violently anti-religious sentiments of the Communist creed. It is a matter of record that the PVOs had no compunction whatsoever in smashing up pagodas and images of the Buddha and other relics in the Madaya area near Mandalay.

All these revealing incidents are highlighted in a recent government publication issued to expose the menace that the Burmese Communists constitute to the cause of Buddhism in Burma. Fully substantiated articles, with photostats and photographs, in the "Pyidaungsutha" edition of April 22, a Burmese language weekly bulletin distributed by the governmental information agency, provide irrefutable indication of what our Burmese Communists really feel on the subject and influence of Buddhism in Burma. Woe betide the cause of Buddhism in Burma should the Communists ever come into power.

Various observers throughout the 11 years of Communist insurgency in the country have speculated and advocated a more positive action taken by the government in its anti-Communist activities. Undoubtedly, military offensives and socio-economic reforms form integral parts of the wheel pattern, but it remains, nevertheless that the hub of the wheel for any intelligently or consciously directed anti-Communist movement would be the weapon of publicity to expose the Communists, as they really are, to the people.

It is an axiom of truth that the strongest feelings of anti-Communism may easily be traced to the violently anti-religious overtones of Communism. Accordingly, it was only in the expected nature of things that full publicity to expose the Communist menace to religion and to Buddhism in Burma would long have been fully exploited. It will serve no useful purpose to castigate the previous governments or regimes in their failure or oversight to utilise this intrinsic weapon against the menace of Communism in Burma. Let us remain content that it is not too late now that the present government has had the perspicacity to see the obvious.

The utter significance of the Communist menace to religion and to Buddhism in Burma comes into better perspective when we take into account the overwhelming influence that Buddhism exerts in the social, political and economic life of our country. Buddhism has shaped the lives and thinking of the peoples of Burma for ages and continues to do so, and it is this fact, as the Communists well realise, that constitutes the main barrier to any Communist aspirations to hold complete sway over the people of Burma. Consequently, the Burmese Communists have spared no pains to attack to subvert and to undermine the foundation of Buddhism in Burma. In retrospect, the previous leaders of Burma have not been quite unaware of the Communist menace and have indeed carried out many noteworthy measures to thwart the Communist aim. Besides military operations and various socio-economic reforms to steal the Communists' thunder, our former leaders have promoted really stalwart measures to stem the Communist tide. This is evident in the measures for the revival of Buddhism and an awakening of the people to a conscious recognition of the values that lie in their historic faith.

The revival of Buddhism in Burma includes the creation by government of a Buddha Sasana Council in 1950, the establishment of a Pāli

University to encourage study of the language of the Buddhist scriptures, the rebuilding of pagodas and monasteries in various towns of Burma, establishment of various centres for meditation, the widely heralded holding of the Sixth Great Buddhist Council, the promotion of various Buddhist journals and publications, and the regular broadcasting of Buddhist sermons.

But it has long been felt that more positive measures should be taken to utilise the deeply religious feelings of the people so as to alienate them from the crafty Communists, the enemies of religion. It is heartening to note that this present issue of the "Pyidaungsutha", exposing in full the menace that Communism holds to Buddhism in Burma, is but the opening salvo in a well-directed campaign to inform, acquaint and educate the people of Burma with the manifest aim of the Communists to obliterate Buddhism entirely in this country.

The present government should be most highly commended on its sagacity and wisdom to use the most powerful weapon at its command to expose the Communist peril. The weapon of publicity, the weapon of information is indeed a most formidable weapon. And in this context, perhaps it will still remain an enigma to most of us as to why the media of mass communication continues to remain as pathetically forlorn and ignored, more or less, in our fair land.



The Rangoon Post

Editorial Views: (April 28, 1959)

DHAMMA IN DANGER

We are thankful to the Ministries of Defence and Information for the publication of a booklet in Burmese, with the apt title of "Dhammantaraya", which means the Teachings of the Lord Buddha are in danger. The publishers have been able to produce irrefutable evidences of the Communist attempts to undermine Buddhism and then to destroy it altogether. Many of us suspected that this nefarious game had been going on for some time, but no one had any idea of the extent and magnitude until today. The Dhamma is, indeed in danger. Having taken cognizance of the danger the next logical step is to remove the danger. Unfortunately, judging from evidences, the danger had been allowed to grow to undue proportions already. But it is not too late to take positive steps to combat and eliminate the danger. Nothing less than a sustained campaign is called for, a campaign in which all Buddhists must take part.

Columnist: (May 9, 1959)

THE WAY OF ALL FLESH

by KYAW YWE

Do you believe in life after this one? Most people do. The Communists do not. We, Buddhists, believe not only in life after this one but also in a series of life to come, not only in a series of life after this life but also in a series of life before this life, the life unending, called Samsara, until we are able to break the cycle of birth, old age, sickness and death and reach Nirvana.

It is, of course, impossible to prove scientifically that we do continue to live after death in another life in another form. But in Burma cases of re-birth are not rare. Many people will swear that they have come across people who were reborn and could remember and recount their previous lives with astonishing details and accuracy. I must confess that I have not come across a single person who could do that, although quite a number claim that they were so and so in their past life.

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Fortunately, the memory of such re-born persons does not continue beyond childhood, mainly because the embarrassing parents look upon such revelations with disfavour. With some the memory is so strong that they return to their parents or husbands or wives, as the case may be, of their previous lives.

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It is true, according to Buddhism, we have had innumerable births and deaths before this life and we will have uncountable births and deaths in the future. Such being the cases, we are all reborns. The only difference is that some can remember their previous lives, while by far the large majority cannot.

* * * *

I used to have an aunt. She was supposed to be a reincarnation. But she did not remember a thing. One day she met a young man by chance. Together they wept and wept without saying a word. They recognised each other. Though they did not say anything about their relationship in previous life,

the all-knowing around them said that they were mother and son before. The son was a high-ranking government officer.

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Not very long ago, the son died suddenly of heart failure and the mother followed him very soon after. In the mental and spiritual plane, there are many things which we cannot explain in terms of mathematics or physics. Our knowledge about them is almost nil. But that does not mean that they are any less real than matters physical.

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Columnist: (May 10, 1959)

THE WAY OF ALL FLESH

by KYAW YWE

There is one place I should like to pay a visit before I die and that place is no other than a place where Communism, I mean real Communism, exists. People say that Russia and Red China are Communistic, but I won't be so sure. Nevertheless, I want to visit them if I have an opportunity.

You would like to know why. For one thing it's in my blood to visit places with no particular set view in mind. I just want to see places. For another, I want to see Russia or China where people are so different from us in their outlook and ideology. I want to see Russia more because the so-called Communistic life there has become more or less settled, whereas in China it is still in the making.

Buddha has taught us that there are three evils which we must learn to control, if we want to get anywhere near our cherished goal of Nirvana. They are Lawba (greed), Dawtha (anger), and

Mawha (illusion). They are part of our human nature, but it is this nature that we are asked to control or exterminate. The three are closely related and if one is brought under control, the other two will tone down. Buddha wants us to control through self-discipline.

* * * *

But here are the countries where control over one of the three evils, namely, greed, has been imposed under governmental authority. It is perfectly natural for the poor people wishing to become rich, and the rich people wishing to become richer; and in Democratic countries, they enjoy full liberty to improve their financial and social status.

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But in a Communist country, no such freedom exists. You are forbidden to accumulate private wealth. There is therefore no stimulus for anyone to get rich, in other words, your greed is not allowed a free play. Though this is not self-imposed, it is bound to have some changes in a person's outlook, and, it may be expected, his anger and illusion will be toned down correspondingly. Have they become less worldly and more spiritual? This is what I would look forward to seeing in Russia, if I have an opportunity to go there. Words like greed, avarice, etc., should disappear from the Russian vocabulary.

I would like to observe the way they conduct their business, and see whether everyone is trying to get one better in the race for winning wealth or whether there is any such competition there. On the face of it there seems no necessity, since wealth is forbidden. Has this new outlook changed human nature to the extent of creating goodwill among men? It will be very interesting. Don't you think so?



DHAMMANTARĀYA

In the wake of this publication, the *Dhammantarāya*, there have followed assemblies and gatherings all over the country by the masses, true to their Buddhist heritage and tradition, to denounce the Communists for their blasphemy.

Up to August 29, 1959, such gatherings to denounce the Communists for their attack on religion have been held in over 223 towns in various parts of the country; gatherings attended by 26,370 members of the Sangha and 562,170 men and women.

Over 1,097,900 copies of *Dhammantarāya*, have been distributed throughout the country, since its first issue in middle of April this year. The cost of 847,900 copies is borne by donors both Buddhists and non-Buddhists throughout the country. Printing orders from more donors are still coming in. The book has thus become the best-seller in the history of Burma.